

Serial No. 09/942,736

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 7, 10, 11, 13 and 15 have been amended. Claims 1, 3, 5-11 and 13-18 are pending and under consideration.

On a procedural note, applicant filed a Petition to Withdraw Office Action on March 31, 2006. A copy of that Petition is enclosed herewith. Applicant has not yet received a decision on the Petition. Because the March 2, 2006 Office Action was improper, it is submitted that the next Office Action should be a non-final Office Action. Because applicants have not yet received official word that the Office Action has been withdrawn, this amendment is being filed to ensure full compliance with all Patent Office requirements.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8-11, 13, 14 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,076,060 to Lin et al.

As discussed previously, Lin et al. discloses a method and apparatus which employ a suffix rule set to match substrings from the end of an input text string to suffix rules, a prefix rule set to match substrings from the beginning of the input text string to prefix rules and an infix rule set to match substrings taken from the middle of the input text or any remaining text not matched by either the suffix or prefix rules. Phonetic data is produced for any portion of the input text that matches a particular rule (see Abstract).

Lin et al. discloses a method and apparatus, which employ a suffix rule set to match substrings from the end of an input text to suffix rules, a prefix rule set to match substrings from the beginning of the input text to prefix rules and an infix rule set to match substrings taken from the middle of the input text or any remaining text not matched by either the suffix or prefix rule sets. Phonetic data is produced for each portion of input text when there is a match with a particular rule (see Abstract). In Lin et al. the grapheme/phoneme conversion of an infix constituent of a word is not performed using information available from the phonetically transcribed prefix or the phonetically transcribed suffix. That is, grapheme/phoneme conversion for an infix constituent in Lin et al. is not performed as a function of the phonetic transcription of a subword contained in the phonetically transcribed given word.

In the Office Action, the Examiner cites column 15, line 42 through column 16, line 24 of Lin et al. This section of the reference simply indicates that a dictionary look-up function is used in association with the suffix rule set and the prefix rule set. The claims require that the further constituent be transcribed with the aid of an out-of-vocabulary treatment. Column 15, lines 45-49 of Lin et al. provide "However, in this embodiment, the dictionary look-up function 33 is

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provided not only for the whole input word 37, but also for each of the first and second remainders 24 and 25, output from the respective compare functions 21, 22." Therefore, to the extent that the infix constituent is defined as a remainder not matched with by either the right-to-left (suffix) or left-to-right (prefix) compare functions, the infix constituent has some dependence on the phonetic transcription of the subword. However, the claims have been amended to clarify that the further constituent is transcribed based on phonetic context, as a function of the phonetic transcription of the subword. Lin et al. certainly does not suggest these features.

The potential advantages of the present invention, related to performing out-of-vocabulary treatment for phonetic transcription of the further constituent as a function of the phonetic transcription of the subword are described on page of Application paragraph [008].

Claims 7 and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C §103(a) as being obvious over Lin et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,913,194 to Karaali et al. Claims 7 and 15 have been rewritten in independent form. Karaali et al. is cited for the neuron network limitations of these claims. The Examiner argues that the combination would have been obvious because Karaali et al. teaches his invention reduces the size of the neuron network without substantial degradation in the quality of the generated synthetic speech. This excerpt from the reference relates to modifying a neuron network. This excerpt does not provide motivation for incorporating a neuron network where one does not exists. It is submitted that there is no motivation for modifying Lin et al. with a neuron network, to achieve the claimed invention.

In view of the forgoing amendment and remarks, it is submitted that the prior art rejections should be withdrawn. There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

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If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via facsimile to: Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450
on June 2, 2006
By: M. J. Henry
Date: June 2 2006

JUN 02 2006

Docket No.: 1454.1067

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of:

Horst-Udo HAIN

Serial No. 09/942,736

Group Art Unit: 2654

Confirmation No. 8402

Filed: August 31, 2001

Examiner: AZAD, ABUL K

For: METHOD FOR SPEECH SYNTHESIS

PETITION TO WITHDRAW OFFICE ACTIONCommissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Applicant hereby petitions to have an Office Action mailed on March 2, 2006 withdrawn. As described below, the Applicant requested several times to have an interview before an Office Action was issued, and these request were knowingly ignored.

On December 23, 2005, Applicant filed a written interview request form. A copy of request form and a copy of the Patent Office date-stamped postcard are enclosed. Subsequently, the undersigned contacted the Examiner many times in an attempt to schedule an interview. On February 13, 2006, the undersigned prepared a second interview request form and faxed this form to the Examiner. Enclosed is a copy of the form, as faxed to the Examiner. Subsequently, the undersigned repeated his request for an interview with the Examiner. The Examiner indicated that he would possibly be able to see the undersigned on February 22, 2006 at 3 p.m. On that day, the undersigned traveled to the Patent Office and made numerous telephone calls to the Examiner while at the Patent Office. The Examiner did not answer the phone.

After the missed interview, the undersigned made additional telephone calls to the Examiner. None of these calls resulted in an interview being successfully scheduled.

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To avoid a premature final Office Action, it is submitted that March 2, 2006 Office Action should be withdrawn. A first Office Action should not be issued until after an interview has been conducted. The Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at his earliest convenience to schedule an interview.

This petition is necessary to correct an error on the part of the Patent Office, not an Applicant error. Accordingly, no fee is enclosed herewith. However, if it is deemed that such a fee is necessary, the commissioner is authorized Staas & Halsey deposit acct. No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: March 31 2006

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A rectangular stamp with the word "COPY" in a bold, sans-serif font. The stamp is slightly tilted and has a small square icon to its left.